FIRE PREVENTION: KEEPING THE HOLIDAYS HAPPY

KNOWLEDGE

VOL 4 DECEMBER 2010

OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY

KILL THE CHILL

- THE RIGHT CALL
- CHECK YOUR HEAD
- WINTER, YOUR CAR AND YOU

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN BAGHDAD

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LEADERS SOLDIERS
CIVILIANS FAMILIES

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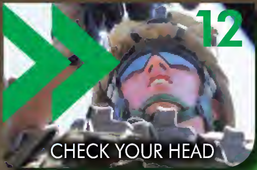

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We welcome your feedback. Please e-mail comments to **safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil**.

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The holidays are upon us once again, and spending time with Family and friends will be at the top of many wish lists this year. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you, our Army Family, for all you do every day and especially during this most special of seasons. Even in the face of extreme sacrifice and little rest, each of you — Soldiers, Family members and Civilians — continue to maintain steadfast watch over our nation and its people. As you take your seats at the holiday table, be it at home with loved ones or in a dining facility with your fellow warriors overseas, please know your service is remembered and appreciated by those you protect.

I wish you all a blessed, healthy and safe holiday season and look forward to the continuing successes 2011 will bring our great Army. Happy holidays and, as always, Army Safe is Army Strong!

WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Director of Army Safety

REMAIN DURIN

The 2010 holiday season is upon us. One of the best things about the holidays is having time to spend with Family and friends, and for many of our Soldiers, their Family members and our Civilians, visits like these are long overdue. Between deployments, assignments in locations far from home and the daily rigors of Army life, the holidays are often the only time Soldiers can relax and catch up with their loved ones. This downtime greatly benefits our Soldiers and the Families who support them, contributing to the overall resiliency and well-being of our total force. But it also provides a perfect opportunity for spouses, parents, siblings and other relatives to engage with their Soldiers and each other on safety, especially regarding driving and other off-duty hazards.

During last year's holiday exodus, we lost four Soldiers to off-duty accidents. Three of these deaths occurred in privately owned vehicles during the late evening or early morning hours in parts of the country affected by severe winter weather. The fourth fatality was a Soldier, home a little more than a month from a rotation to theater, who accidentally shot himself with a newly purchased handgun at his parents' house. All four Soldiers were on leave away from their duty stations at the time of their accidents, highlighting the critical need for active Family engagement when supervisors and peers aren't there to correct unsafe behavior.

While every individual is different and no single approach will work with all Soldiers, parents and spouses often know what it takes to reach their loved ones. Leaders are missing out if they don't

> The **LESSONS** learned during this **CRITICAL TIME** can pay **GREAT DIVIDENDS** throughout the new year and **ENHANCE** Soldier **SAFETY** both **ON** and **OFF DUTY.**

ING FOCUSED G THE HOLIDAYS

leverage this influence every day of the year by involving Families in their safety programs and sharing information when needed, beginning with the holiday season. The lessons learned during this critical time can pay great dividends throughout the new year and enhance Soldier safety both on and off duty. Leaders can find great ideas and tips for involving Families in their safety programs by checking out the Family Engagement Kit on the USACR/Safety Center website at https://safety.army.mil.

Although the holidays are sure to be busy, we can't forget about our Band of Brothers and Sisters during the coming days and weeks. Take care of your buddies and remember to look out for those who don't have holiday plans. And for those of you continuing the mission through the holidays — whether downrange or at home station — ensure your peers and subordinates stay focused even though their minds may be somewhere else. Be extra vigilant, watch for those Soldiers who might be having a hard time and share the ways you've coped during holidays away from home. Never underestimate the positive impact your "war stories" and kind words can have on a struggling Soldier.

Finally, arm yourself with the best knowledge available to fight the hazards of cold weather. Snow and ice make for great fun on the slopes but are extremely dangerous on roadways, and winter weather, alcohol and speed are nearly always a lethal combination. This year's Army Safe Fall/Winter Campaign includes videos, posters, media articles and a toolkit that Leaders, Soldiers and Families can use to build safety programs and enhance safety awareness. The full campaign is available on the USACR/Safety Center website via the "Campaign Corner."

I wish you all the best the season has to offer and many blessings throughout the coming year. Wherever you are and whatever your plans, have a happy and safe holiday!«

Army Safe is Army Strong!

Mike Eyer

MICHAEL EYER
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Combat
Readiness/Safety Center

THE RIGHT CALL

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 PETER P. LEONE III
U.S. Army Reserve
St. Augustine, Fla.

As a young warrant officer on my first assignment out of flight school, I was chomping at the bit to go out and do great things. I considered myself fortunate to be assigned to Joint Task Force-Bravo at Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras, a unit with an active peacetime mission.

For the first several months, I flew hundreds of hours under the mentorship of many great pilots, including some Vietnam-era aviators near the end of their careers. With only one dot on my bar and about four months left on my tour, I received pilot in command (PC) orders and was told to make the commander proud.

My first assignment as a new PC was a five-day mission to deliver Air Force medical personnel to several small villages to conduct immunizations of Honduran nationals. My UH-1 was old, but she cleaned up nice. I was looking forward to the challenges of pre-global positioning system navigation using only charts and time/distance/heading to navigate to settlements that, in many cases, were nothing more than a cluster of huts in the middle of nowhere.

The initial leg of the flight was a long one. The first hour or so was filled with the happy chatter of a crew with good morale and glad to be in the air doing their job. The crew chief pinned open the doors and, after about an hour, boredom settled in. The warm breeze and the steady whine of the T-53 engine overhead threatened to put everybody to sleep in the back.

The door gunner came on the intercom and suggested we spice up the flight by dropping down and doing some terrain flight along a narrow, winding river below. His suggestion was met with a chorus of approval from the rest of the crew. I could see the passengers were excited over the possibility.

During our mission planning brief, we discussed low-level modes for this type mission. The rule was low-level modes were to be used "as necessary," and the unit standing operating procedures left this up to the PC's discretion. My first thought was that low-level flight really wasn't "necessary" at this point in the mission, but the temptation was there to have a little fun and treat the troops to some turn-and-burn excitement.

After months of doing what other PCs wanted to do, the decision was now up to me. Since I hadn't yet given a flat "no" to the idea, the crew sensed I might be on the fence. Now the pressure came from all sides. The intercom was jammed with "Come on, sir!" and "Let's do it!" The Air Force colonel in charge of the medical detail borrowed the door gunner's headset and challenged me to "show the Air Force how it's done." Even my co-pilot, a captain, joined in.

I had learned long ago to trust my gut, and an unplanned deviation for a joyride just didn't pass the gut check. They weren't going to leave it alone, so a go/no-go was required. There was universal disappointment when I rendered my decision of "negative."

We continued the mission, visiting more than a dozen villages over the next two days. On the third day, I noted the next village on the list was located on the same river where I had previously declined to fly low level. I conducted a recon of the landing and pickup zones prior to landing. The first thing I noticed was the village actually straddled the river — half the village on one side, half on the other.

On short final, I detected a steel cable strung across the river between the two settlements. I inspected the cable after landing and estimated it to be about 2 inches in diameter. The cable was used to slide messages and packages from one side of the river to the other. Then it hit me like a bolt of lightning. If I had chosen to run the river at low level, my helicopter would've likely collided with that cable! At 90 knots, the wire strike protection system wouldn't have been effective against a cable that large and the collision would've been catastrophic. In short, my aircraft, crew and all aboard would have been dead at the bottom of the river.

I called the crew over and showed them the cable. Asking the group if they remembered their request to fly low-level, I let the significance of what I was showing them sink in. Our crew chief just shook his head and said, "Good call, sir." Several times over the next few days, he stopped whenever he saw me and repeated, "Good call, sir."

This incident drove home many lessons for my crew and me. I made the right call on this occasion, despite heavy pressure from my entire crew and some senior officers. However, I fault myself for even considering it. In this case, wrong would have meant dead. As aviators and Soldiers, we are risk takers by nature and necessity, but we don't have to be risk seekers.«

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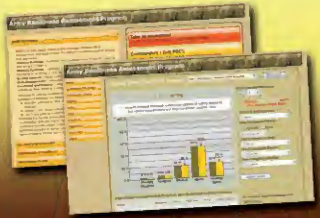

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Steppi Into D

ng anger

GEORGE C. ARZENTE III
Installation Safety Office
Fort Campbell, Ky.

I was on temporary duty (TDY) at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., in December 2009 when I had an experience that reinforced the importance of pedestrian safety.

I had just refueled my government vehicle on base and headed out the gate. Within five minutes, I got caught up in bumper-to-bumper traffic. I remember thinking, "I'll bet someone had a fender-bender ahead and now I'm stuck in this traffic." The longer traffic continued to move at a snail's pace, the more annoyed I became. I thought, "It was probably someone texting or talking on a cell phone. Someone wasn't paying attention to what they were doing and here I am being inconvenienced."

After about 30 minutes, the line of traffic snaked through a mall parking lot. I was stopped at a red light when I noticed a man sitting on the ground to my right. He had his back against the front tire of a police car and was holding his head in his hands. I was puzzled for a moment until I looked ahead and saw an abandoned car stopped in the left lane of traffic. Beneath it, a white sheet covered someone's body. It struck me that the body under the sheet was awfully small for an adult. Then it hit me — it was a child!

With 23 years working as a safety professional, I immediately felt foolish I hadn't considered this could be a fatal accident. The next evening, when I arrived back home in Tennessee, I went on the Internet and discovered the little body under that sheet was that of a 6-year-old girl. The report said the little girl, her 5-year-old brother and her mother were walking home after Christmas shopping and had to cross a six-lane major thoroughfare.

The mother hadn't crossed this intersection before and didn't know she needed to push the crosswalk button for more time to cross safely. Once the traffic light had turned red and traffic stopped in all six lanes, she and her children began crossing the intersection. She was pushing her son in a stroller and holding her daughter's hand. They'd only passed the second lane of traffic when the light turned green. The mother said she heard a car rev its engine and, seconds later, her little girl was lying dead on the street. The mother suffered broken ribs and a broken leg — only her son escaped uninjured. A background check of the driver revealed a history of traffic violations. Those included multiple tickets for speeding, running stop signs and driving with an expired license or registration.

The driver's statement on the crash was never published, so I don't know his explanation of what happened. However, the fact remains he was responsible for operating his vehicle in a safe and alert manner. Even though he had the green light, he was responsible for ensuring the crosswalk was clear in front of him. But he didn't. As a result, six days before Christmas, a little girl lost her precious life in a terrible pedestrian accident.

The grief felt by that family was echoed by the families of Soldiers in fiscal 2010. Between Oct. 1, 2009, and Aug. 20, 2010, one Soldier died in an on-duty pedestrian accident and 11 more in off-duty pedestrian accidents — nine of which occurred between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m. In some cases, Soldiers put themselves in danger by walking along or crossing roads after drinking. In other cases, careless motorists ran down Soldiers in crosswalks or while jogging. In one case, a Soldier on her way to sick call was killed by a car when she stepped from the sidewalk into a parking lot. Two Soldiers trying to be Good Samaritans were struck and killed by passing vehicles as they stopped to assist other motorists. Most recently, an intoxicated Soldier was walking down the middle of a road when he was struck and killed. In perhaps the most bizarre case, two Soldiers got into an argument while driving on an interstate, pulled onto the shoulder, got out and began fighting. Both Soldiers were struck and killed by a passing motorist.

Nothing can be done for these Soldiers. However, you don't have to join them in the accident reports. Here are some safety tips for you when you're traveling via the "shoe leather express."

- Always walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk and you must walk in the roadway, always walk facing traffic.
- Dress to be seen. Wearing bright or light-colored clothing helps drivers see you. Reflective clothing is the best, but never assume drivers can or have seen you.
- Cross streets only at marked crosswalks or intersections.
- If crossing a multiple-lane roadway, pedestrians should visually check each lane as they proceed to ensure they are clear.
- If a car is parked where you are trying to cross, look for other drivers who may be pulling out and not see you because they are looking for traffic.
- Remember, telephone poles, utility boxes and parked vehicles can interfere with an oncoming driver's ability to see you.
- Look LEFT – RIGHT – LEFT in countries like the United States, where motorists drive on the right side of the street. In Japan or other nations where drivers use the left side of the road, look RIGHT – LEFT – RIGHT prior to entering the street.
- Give drivers ample time to stop before you enter the crosswalk.
- Crossing at locations with traffic signals helps motorists see you.
- Wearing headphones while walking, skating, jogging, bicycling or riding a motorcycle, pocket bike or moped on post is prohibited. If you choose to wear headphones off post, always remove them while crossing the street so you can hear approaching traffic.
- Always hold a child by the hand while crossing a street. Remember, walk, don't run.
- If the intersection has a pedestrian walk button, press it and cross when you are cleared to go, keeping in mind that all crosswalks do not allow the same amount of time to cross.«

GEAR UP!

FOR SNOWY WALKS

- Never assume drivers can see you or will stop for you.

- Make eye contact with drivers to ensure they see you.

- Don't take a walk signal, a green light or a driver for granted. Look both ways to be certain.

- Crossing safely is your responsibility.

ARMY SAFE
FALL WINTER
NO TIME TO CHILL

CHECK YOUR HEAD

GUNNERY SGT. SHANE LEVINGS
1st Battalion, 4th Marines, 1st Marine Division
Camp Pendleton, Calif.

When I was a young, hard-charging lance corporal, I was put in charge of a vehicle that had a mounted .50-caliber heavy machine gun. I had a very experienced machine-gun team and we'd conducted several live-fire evolutions over the past few months. We were doing very well — so well that all of us were getting big heads.

When we returned to base after 27 days in the field, we were surprised to find we had several newbies straight from the U.S. Marine Corps School of Infantry. Being the junior vehicle commander in the company, I never expected any of these new Marines to be placed in my truck. Man, was I ever wrong.

I received a new private as a gunner, while my experienced gunner was placed in a different vehicle. This was upsetting to me and the rest of my crew because we'd lost one of the best machine-gunners in the battalion. This would be the first time I had to train a new Marine in his job, but I accepted the challenge with great pride.

The whole team was doing well during the next field exercise, but we noticed the disadvantage of losing our previous gunner. Still, the new private was coming along faster than expected, and we were helping train him to the best of our abilities. About two

months into that training, we were working like a well-oiled machine and back as one of the best teams in the company. Once again, though, we were getting complacent because we trusted each other's decisions and actions.

Around March, we were out on another long training exercise with the battalion. We were good. The commanders from other companies were requesting the whole section to support them because all the vehicle teams were very proficient and well rounded. This confidence is what got to us — especially me.

We had five HMMWVs in our section. We used two of them to mount our Browning M2 .50-caliber machine guns; two for our tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) systems; and the section leader had an MK-19 machine gun. When the convoy was traveling, I was in the lead vehicle while the section leader was in the third vehicle to center him in case we were attacked from any direction.

If you are familiar with the .50-caliber, you know headspace and timing are vital for the weapon to operate properly. As a machine-gunner, we have three simple rules to follow when dealing with the .50-caliber: 1) Check the headspace and timing any time you conduct a barrel change; 2) Check the headspace and timing whenever there is a change in gunners; and 3) Check the headspace and timing whenever the gunner is in doubt. These are our golden rules and we're supposed to follow them at all costs.

We were returning to our battalion's defense after conducting some deliberate attacks. Because the .50-caliber gets very dirty in the desert, we'd positioned our trucks in the perimeter and were conducting our weapons maintenance and drawing range cards, which we do after every mission. I went up top to assist my gunner with the cleaning because we received intelligence that we were going to be attacked within the hour.

We were in the process of getting the .50-caliber back together when the section leader called the vehicle commanders together to give us a down-and-dirty situation report. He then sent us back to our trucks to get ready for the upcoming attack. It was about to be "on" and my truck was ready — or so I thought.

Right as the attack was about to kick off, I got a call from the section leader to jump up on the gun and take over because there were many higher-ups watching us. I did as ordered, but I failed to do one important thing before I loaded my rounds and began to fire — check the headspace and timing! One of the three times you check it is when you change gunners, and I plain out failed to check it due to complacency.

As that first round fired to travel downrange, so did the barrel. The .50-caliber casing exploded inside the receiver and sent shrapnel everywhere. By the grace of God, my assistant gunner and I weren't injured. (You see, when this accident occurred, eye protection and gloves were not mandatory as they are today, so my assistant gunner and I are extremely lucky we both still have our vision.)

So what happened? As the gunner and I were putting the .50-caliber together, I was called away, so he finished by himself. In a rush, he put the barrel back in the barrel support but never screwed the barrel in or checked headspace and timing. Some might say this accident was his fault, but how could it be? My negligence was the cause. I was the one who failed to follow one of the three golden rules: Check headspace and timing whenever there is a change in the gunner.

This accident could have killed or seriously injured both of us. It was a leadership failure and failure to comply with the standards. This accident was preventable until complacency took over. It's a mistake I won't make again.«

"This **ACCIDENT** could have **KILLED** or seriously **INJURED** both of **US**. It was a **LEADERSHIP** failure and **FAILURE** to **COMPLY** with the **STANDARDS**."

IS THE SAFETY ON?

The Range & Weapons Safety Toolbox is a collection of resources to help Leaders establish and maintain an effective range and weapons safety program.

RANGE & WEAPONS SAFETY TOOLBOX

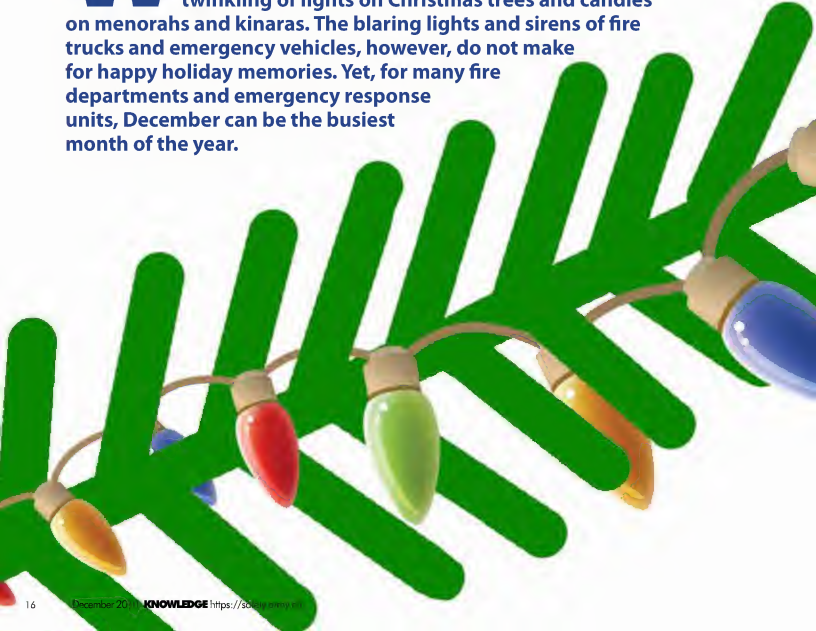
CHECK IT OUT TODAY!

https://safety.army.mil/rangeweaponssafety

Keeping the Holi

TRACEY RUSSELL
Ground Task Force
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

When thinking about December, many warm thoughts come to mind: snowball fights, celebrations with Family and friends and the twinkling of lights on Christmas trees and candles on menorahs and kinaras. The blaring lights and sirens of fire trucks and emergency vehicles, however, do not make for happy holiday memories. Yet, for many fire departments and emergency response units, December can be the busiest month of the year.



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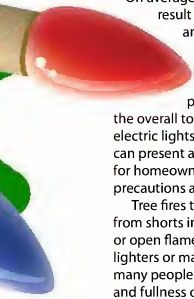
H ppy

According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), fire departments across the United States respond to an estimated 128,700 fires every December. On average, these incidents result in 1,650 injuries and 415 deaths. While Christmas tree fires account for only a small percentage of the overall total each year, electric lights and candles can present a very real hazard for homeowners if proper precautions aren't taken.



Tree fires typically start from shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches. And while many people prefer the smell and fullness of fresh-cut trees, they might not be aware of the special care and maintenance required to keep these trees fireproof. The National Fire Protection Agency provides the following safety tips for holiday decorations:

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1 to 2 inches from the base of the trunk.
- Ensure the tree is at least three feet away from heat sources, such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and that it's not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily and always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant. Ensure artificial trees are labeled, certified or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other items that can burn. Never use lit candles to decorate a tree.
- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory.
- Replace any string of lights that has worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Use plastic clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords are not damaged.

Once you've decked your halls, apply the same fire safety awareness to preparations for your holiday meal. According to the USFA, cooking fires are the leading cause of residential blazes during the month of December. Never leave items unattended on the stove and be extremely careful with towels and oven mitts near open flames.

The holidays can get a bit chaotic, but take time to think about fire safety before and during your celebrations. An extra moment of attention is all it takes to keep your season peaceful and ensure the only fire you experience is the one that's burning safely in your fireplace.«

A Roll of the D

While deployed to an Eastern European country in the late 1990s as a chief warrant officer three, I was a maintenance test pilot assigned to a UH-60L air assault company. My unit was more than halfway through our deployment with no major aircraft accidents. Well, at least none yet!

I started my duty day late in the afternoon with the intent of flying a night vision goggle (NVG) currency mission later that evening. I was in the flight operations office reviewing the mission and maintenance status boards to determine what needed my attention to support the night's missions. Seeing no major issues, I went about planning my own mission while the other night crews planned theirs.

A short time later, one of the pilots in command (PC) approached me regarding a two-ship air assault mission scheduled for that night. He asked if I was available to fill in for his pilot (PI) if he was unable to perform the mission. I told him I was available, and since it would meet my currency requirements, it was all the better. The PC replied he would let me know when he knew. The afternoon progressed and I heard nothing, so I continued planning my own mission.

The PC informed me later that evening I was needed for the air assault mission. "Great," I thought. Now I had to jump through my butt because the takeoff for the assault mission was rapidly approaching. The mission briefs were changed to reflect the correct crews; however, the PC had already conducted the detailed crew brief and there wasn't time to get me up-to-speed on what the mission entailed. The PC of my aircraft said it was an easy mission and all we had to do was follow lead. I knew better, but went with the flow. That was mistake No. 1.

> "We were just lucky, **PLAIN AND SIMPLE.** The dice were **ROLLED** and **WE CAME OUT ON TOP.**"

We found no issues during our preflight. It was during our run-up checks that the first issue surfaced. Our NVG searchlight would only extend about 45 degrees. It swiveled fully left and right and turned on and off, but it just wouldn't fully extend. After a brief discussion of the meaning of an "operational" searchlight in Army Regulation 95-1, we decided it was sufficient for our mission. Mistake No. 2.

The rest of the run-up, linkup and pickup of our passengers went off without a hitch. So, off we went with me on the controls into the inky blackness of the mountains of Kosovo to drop off 22 infantrymen on some dark ridgeline. I knew nothing about the route or the location. Mistake No. 3.

The flight to the mountains was also uneventful. I was flying and my PC was comfortably watching the world go by. I continued fiddling with the searchlight, hoping like hell that just one more cycle of the switch would free the stuck light and provide enough illumination for my totally dark environment. Instead, all I had was the 30- to 40-degree illumination under and slightly forward of the nose. Also during this flight, I was applying a technique I had subconsciously learned of flying higher than lead in the belief that as long as I was above and behind the lead aircraft, I wouldn't hit any unnoticed wires that might be along the route of flight. Mistake

ice

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST

No. 4. Never mind that we had an updated hazards map onboard and flying the specified route would have eliminated that hazard.

We entered the mountain range in a valley and flew up that valley at about 100 knots indicated airspeed. I clearly saw the lead ship navigating up the valley, probably 100 to 200 feet below me and 10 rotor disks ahead, with an infrared (IR) searchlight illuminating his pathway. This is where the fun began.

For whatever reason, I pushed the IR searchlight button one more time to attempt to see in front of me. Lo and behold, what did I see? Three sets of large wires were spread evenly and neatly dead center in front of our windshield! I reacted instinctively, yelling, "Wires!" across the internal communication system (ICS). I then yanked all the collective I could pull, applied aft cyclic and mentally prepared for impact. The engines screamed in rapid response and the rotor held its 100 percent RPM, but I just knew it was too late. Suddenly, a thought flashed through my mind of what our sleepy passengers were thinking in the back, oblivious to what I had just yelled across the ICS and what was about to happen to us.

I knew I had reacted soon enough to avert a full head-on strike, but I was also dreadfully aware it would be a miracle if the tail section or tail landing gear didn't snag those wires. After a few terrifying seconds, nothing happened. The PC was pulling himself together asking what had just happened, so I told him. He never saw the wires. We continued flying, discussing the last few moments with the lead aircraft and soon realized that they had not seen the wires either and had actually flown just under them, never realizing it. My technique of flying above lead to avoid wires had put my aircraft at risk.

We all took a deep breath, continued the mission and dropped off our passengers at the designated landing zone without further incident. We flew back to base, shut down and pulled out the maps of the section where the incident had occurred. We immediately realized that not only had lead underflown the wires, but they were plainly marked on my PC's and the lead ship's hazard map. Talk about complacency, overconfidence and a lack of discipline that created a chain of events that nearly led to disaster.

In this case, the result wasn't an accident. Nevertheless, it wasn't due to any planning on our part either. We were just lucky, plain and simple. The dice were rolled and we came out on top. Why was it that I just happened to turn on the searchlight moments before a potential impact can only be answered by the big overwatch guy in the sky. Needless to say, we changed our ways.«

Winter, Your

Editor's note: For Soldiers driving in combat, the biggest threat on the road is spelled "I-E-D." For Soldiers driving at home this Christmas, the biggest threat may well be spelled "I-C-E." Will you be its victim?

Driving in the winter means snow, sleet and ice that can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions, hot tempers and unforeseen dangers. To help you make it safely through winter, here are some suggestions from the National Safety Council to make sure that you and your vehicle are prepared.

Car and You

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL
www.nsc.org

Weather

When winter weather sends temperatures plunging, snow and ice affects the road and driving conditions and can pose serious problems. Therefore, it is important to listen to radio and television news forecasts. You can also check out your local daily paper. Being forewarned is being forearmed.

Your Car

Make sure your car is prepared for winter. Start with a checkup that includes:

- Checking the ignition, brakes, wiring, radiator hoses, fan belts and wiper blades. Replacing cracked or worn hoses and belts now can save you a headache later.
- Changing your spark plugs according to the scheduled maintenance plan shown in your owner's manual. This will ensure better mileage and easier starts in the cold.
- Checking the air, fuel and emission filters along with the positive crankcase ventilation valve (PCV). This will make your car run smoother and improve mileage.
- Inspecting the distributor (if your vehicle has one). Look for cracks or chips. These can cause your car to run poorly.
- Checking the battery. If possible, check the fluid level. Check the date the battery was installed and inspect the cables and connections for corrosion.
- Checking the tires for air pressure, tread depth and the condition of the sidewalls. Worn or improperly inflated tires can be hazardous any time, especially on snow and ice.
- Checking the antifreeze levels. The optimum coolant combination is a 50-50 mix of antifreeze and water. Refer to your owner's manual.

Service your car according to the scheduled maintenance listed in your owner's manual to ensure higher gas mileage, quicker starts and better passing performance.

Necessary Equipment

An emergency situation can arise at any time and you must be prepared. Here are some items you should have with you on the road:

- Spare tire (properly inflated), wheel wrench and proper jack.
- Shovel. A small, foldable camping shovel or entrenching tool will work fine.
- Jumper cables. Invest in a good set.
- Tow and tire chains.
- Bag of salt or kitty litter.
- Tool kit. Basic tools like screwdrivers, an adjustable wrench, pliers, hammer, spare fuses and electrical tape can come in handy. If you have to get out of your vehicle, consider wearing a reflective vest or belt to help passing drivers see you.

Essential Supplies

Be prepared by keeping a "survival kit" in your car. Replace any of the items you use. Essential supplies include:

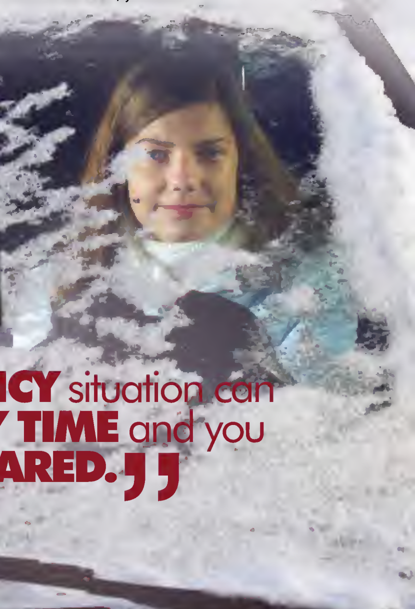
- Working flashlight and extra batteries
- Flares
- Reflective triangles and a brightly colored cloth
- Compass
- First aid kit
- Windshield cleaning squeegee
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Wooden, strike-on-anything, stick matches in a waterproof container
- Scissors and string or cord
- Non-perishable, high-energy foods such as unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits and hard candy

In addition, if you are driving long distances under cold, snowy and icy conditions, you should also carry supplies to keep you warm. These include items such as heavy woolen mittens, socks, a cap and blankets.

If You Become Stranded

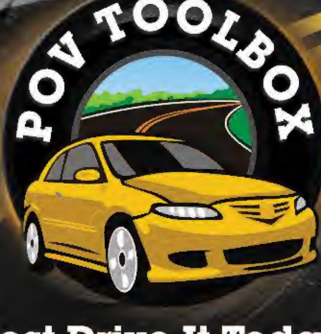
- Do not leave your car unless you know exactly where you are, how far it is to possible help and are certain you will improve your situation.
- To attract attention, light two flares and place one in front of your vehicle and one behind it at a safe distance to warn approaching vehicles.
- If you are sure the car's exhaust pipe is not blocked, run the engine and heater for 10 minutes every hour or so, depending on how much gas you have in the tank.
- Use the woolen items and blankets to keep warm and protect yourself from hypothermia and frostbite.
- Keep at least one window slightly open. Heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.
- Eat hard candy to keep your mouth moist.

So, do you have a plan to survive your road trips at home this winter? Whether the threat is spelled "I-C-E" or "I-E-D," you don't have to be a victim.«



> "An **EMERGENCY** situation can **ARISE** at **ANY TIME** and you must be **PREPARED.**"

ROAD RULES



The Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Risk Management Toolbox is a tool for commanders, Leaders, supervisors and subordinates to use in their organizations. The toolbox contains best practice examples and lessons learned that can be used as accident prevention measures when developing a unit POV safety program.

Test Drive It Today!

https://safety.army.mil/

KILL THE CHILL

VICKI ARNESON-BAKER
Commandant of the Marine Corps-Safety Division
Fort Rucker, Ala.

Each year, Soldiers experience cold weather-related injuries. The responsibility for preventing these injuries is a command and leadership function, as well as a personal responsibility for each Soldier.

Exposure to the cold can lead to a variety of problems for Soldiers and Leaders. However, while the cold makes military tasks more difficult, it does not make them impossible. The key to overcoming the cold and successfully completing the mission lies within an understanding of cold weather injuries and how to prevent them. Officials at the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center offer the following descriptions of the most common cold weather injuries and information on how to prevent them.

Chilblains

Chilblains are a nonfreezing cold injury resulting from repeated, prolonged skin exposure to cold and wet (high humidity) temperatures above freezing. Exposed skin becomes red, tender and hot to the touch and is usually itchy. These symptoms can worsen to an aching, prickly (pins and needles) sensation and then numbness. Chilblains can develop in exposed skin in only a few hours. The most commonly affected areas are the ears, nose, fingers and toes.

Immersion Foot/Trench Foot

Immersion foot/trench foot is a nonfreezing injury that results from prolonged exposure to wet conditions between 32 F to 60 F or inactivity with damp socks and boots. Immersing feet in cold water, not changing socks frequently, not maintaining proper hygiene and allowing sweat to accumulate inside boots or socks will soften the skin, causing tissue loss and often infection. Symptoms in affected areas include cold, swollen, discolored and waxy flesh accompanied by tingling sensations, numbness and pain. In extreme cases, the flesh dies and amputation may be necessary.

Frostnip

Frostnip is the freezing of the top layers of skin tissue and is considered the first degree of frostbite. Frostnip usually results from short-duration exposure to cold air or contact with a cold object such as metal. Exposed skin such as the cheeks, ears, fingers and wrists are more likely to develop frostnip. The top layer of frozen skin

DID YOU KNOW?

According to the U.S. Army Public Health Command, the typical cold weather casualty …

- **is 20 years old.**
- **is from a southern state.**
- **is an E4 or below.**
- **has less than 18 months in service.**
- **has experienced a cold weather injury before.**
- **wears cold weather gear when not needed.**
- **sleeps in a vehicle.**

becomes white and waxy and feels hard and rubbery while the deeper tissue is still soft. Affected areas feel numb and may become swollen but do not blister. Frozen skin thaws quickly, becoming red and painful with eventual peeling. Complete healing usually occurs within 10 days, and frostnip is normally reversible.

Frostbite

Frostbite is the actual freezing of skin tissue. It can extend through all layers of the skin and freeze muscle and bone. Frozen skin may turn red and then gray-blue with blisters. In the worst cases, the skin dies and turns blue-black. At this stage, amputation is often required. Deeply frozen skin feels "wooden" to the touch and the affected body part is too stiff to move.

Instantaneous frostbite can occur when skin comes in contact with super-cooled liquids, including petroleum, oils and lubricants; fuel; antifreeze; and alcohol — all of which remain liquid at temperatures as low as minus 40 F.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a potentially life-threatening condition. It is defined as a general cooling of the body's core temperature below 95 F (normal body temperature is 98.6 F). Hypothermia sets in when body heat loss exceeds the body's heat production due to prolonged cold exposure. Although hypothermia is usually associated with cold climates, it can occur at temperatures well above freezing, especially when a person is exposed to wet conditions over an extended period of time.

Signs and symptoms of hypothermia change as body temperature falls. Mental functions typically decline first, marked with impaired decision-making ability, slurred speech, disorientation, incoherence, irrationality and possible unconsciousness. Muscle functions deteriorate with shivering and loss of fine motor ability (e.g., unable to complete tasks with hands), progressing to stumbling, clumsiness and falling. In severe cases, shivering ceases and the victim exhibits stiffness and an inability to move. Pulse and respiration rates can decrease, progressing to unconsciousness, irregular heartbeat and death.

Unfortunately, early signs and symptoms of hypothermia can be difficult to recognize and may go undetected. Victims

PREVENTING COLD INJ

Individuals can work and play in cold environments if they are properly prepared and understand basic control measures to prevent cold weather injuries.

Keep the Body Warm

- Keep moving by exercising big muscles (arms and legs) to keep warm.
- Avoid alcohol use. Alcohol impairs the body's ability to shiver and gives a false sense of warmth.
- Avoid all tobacco products, as they decrease blood circulation to the skin.
- Eat all meals to maintain energy.
- Drink water or warm non-caffeinated fluids to prevent dehydration. Drinking warm liquids like decaffeinated tea and hot chocolate that contain sugar provides energy to help the body generate additional heat.
- Limit the amount of time spent outside on extremely cold days and periodically move into warm areas such as warming tents.

Wear Proper Clothing

- Wear several layers of loose clothing rather than one or two bulky layers. Air trapped between layers acts as insulation against the cold. Layers may also be removed if you become too hot. Additionally, loose clothing allows blood to circulate to the extremities.
- Ensure all clothing is in good condition, clean and dry. Change wet, damp clothes immediately.

Protect Feet

- Carry extra pairs of socks and change damp socks immediately. Use foot powder to help absorb moisture.
- Avoid tight socks and boots, and never over-tighten boots or shoes.
- Wear overshoes to keep boots and socks clean and dry.

Protect Hands

- Wear gloves or mittens, preferably with inserts, to may deny they are in trouble, so believe the symptoms, not the victim.

Dehydration

Dehydration is a lack of water in the body. Most people associate dehydration with hot weather, but it is very easy to become dehydrated in cold weather. Soldiers can fall victim to dehydration when they fail to drink enough liquid and underestimate fluid loss from sweating. Proper hydration is especially important in cold weather because dehydration adversely affects the body's resistance to cold injury, increasing the chance of cold weather injuries. Remember that proper hydration is essential to supplying the fuel and energy necessary for heat production.

Conclusion

Understanding the factors contributing to cold weather injuries provides a better understanding of the best methods to combat the cold. Environmental factors that can contribute to cold weather injuries include temperature, wind, rain and altitude. Additional factors include immersion; workload; duration of cold/wet exposure; and individual risk factors such as physical fitness, fatigue, health, prior history of cold injury, use of medications, alcohol, nicotine and poor nutrition.

Cold weather injuries are preventable, so people of all ages — Soldiers, Civilians and Family members — must be prepared to kill the chill. Remember, battling the cold is like battling any other enemy — mission success happens only through proper planning and training. Don't get left out in the cold this winter.«

URIES

avoid frostbite injuries.

- Keep gloves and mittens clean and dry. Change damp gloves immediately.
- Warm hands under clothes if they become numb.
- Avoid skin contact with snow, fuel or bare metal that has been exposed to the cold for extended periods.

Protect the Head, Face and Ears

- Wear a hat. As much as 70 percent or more of the body's heat is lost through an uncovered head.
- Cover your face and ears with a scarf to prevent frostbite injuries. In combination, a hat and scarf protect the skin and retain body heat.

- Warm your face and ears by covering, but not rubbing, with your hands.
- Exercise facial muscles to help maintain circulation.

Protect Friends and Family

- Watch for signs of frostbite and other cold weather injuries in your buddies.
- Ask about and assist with rewarming the feet, hands, ears and face.
- Immediately treat persons showing any signs or symptoms of cold injury.
- Remove sick and injured individuals from the cold; they are very susceptible to cold injuries.

More information on cold weather safety and many other winter safety topics is available on the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center website at https://safety.army.mil under the Fall/Winter Safety campaign tab.

Just another Day in Baghdad

STAFF SGT. ANTHONY R. DAVIS
TRADOC Flight Detachment
Fort Monroe, Va.

The day started just like any other in Baghdad, Iraq. We began by reviewing the mission plan and manifest for the day. The route of flight was briefed and all flight crew actions were discussed. We agreed on a timeline to meet at the aircraft after dinner. I had no real concern for this mission's crew mix in the area of operations.

We returned from dinner and began to prepare our weapons and gear with only minimal discussion as the crew began to set up all necessary items for the mission. After preparation to fly, I heard, "Clear the P," which stands for auxiliary power unit. I responded, "P is clear." With a thunderous roar, the Black Hawk came to life. I climbed through my gunner's window as I had so many times before in preparation to take off.

We received clearance to depart the taxiway and transition via what we call "Mike." This was a direct path to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Liberty. Upon landing at FOB Liberty, I exited the aircraft to load my passengers (PAX) at the pickup zone. With PAX in tow, we boarded the aircraft and prepared for takeoff. I heard the major say, "I have the controls." The instructor pilot (IP) then said, "You have the controls." I was a little surprised because the major hardly ever flew due to his position at the staff level.

We took off out of FOB Liberty in a direction that wasn't familiar to me, but I didn't think much of it at the time. I then heard the IP say, "Hey, sir, I think we just flew through a ROZ (restricted operations zone)." The major said, "Oh, well, no big deal."

Seconds later, the aircraft shook violently and began to vibrate. We heard traffic over Baghdad radio that a persistent threat detection system (PTDS) had been cut, so I began to scan higher than normal. I responded, "Sir, I think we just cut down the balloon." There was much confusion in the cockpit. It seemed the major had turned down the radios and was unaware of the balloon's cut tether.

We requested to return to parking and began the shutdown process. Upon exiting the aircraft, I was shocked by the major's haphazard attitude as if nothing had happened and just how close we came to an accident and possibly dying. With my flight gear still on, I began inspecting the rotor system and blades, all the time grateful we were alive. I was disheartened to see the damage to one of the rotor blade tip caps — a tear one-half the length of the cap.

Everything slowed down for a minute as the aviation safety officer arrived on the scene. He informed us the PTDS had been severed from its tether and we were required to go to the doc for blood toxicology and urine samples.

That night was very long and drawn out, as was the rest of the week. I was grounded, pending an investigation, as I awaited the accident report findings. The findings stated the lack of crew cohesion was the main reason for the crew coordination breakdown. The staff officer lacked sufficient flight time in the area of operations, and both the pilot and co-pilot were deficient in responding to the violation of flying through the tethered aerostat. Neither one of the pilots did anything to correct the problem, nor did they coordinate with the crewmembers in the back of the aircraft. In sum, it was a series of severe crew coordination breakdowns that caused the problem and the destruction of a UH-60L tip cap and more $1 million damage to the PTDS.

What Can Your Unit Do?

- Ensure all aircrew members are trained and evaluated on the most current Aircrew Coordination Training-Enhanced programs available for your aircraft.
- Conduct crew and passenger briefings religiously and meticulously using a Leader-approved checklist as part of a standing operating procedure. Brief the actions and responsibilities of all aircrew members beforehand so if an emergency does occur, there is a plan in place instead of trying to "make it up as you go."
- Ensure team rehearsals are conducted before mission execution with emphasis on crew coordination, duties and responsibilities. Plan for the worst scenario, especially if the aircraft is "hot and heavy" or the weather is marginal.
- Emphasize to aircrews the importance of continuing to "fly the aircraft," asking for assistance, offering assistance and continuing to communicate, especially when things start to go bad.
- Conduct after-action reviews or debriefs after the mission and discuss crew coordination successes and deficiencies and how to improve.«

Got a story to tell? We'd love to hear it!

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ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

MY SEAT BELT SAVED ME

MASTER SGT. MILTON I. LEACH
Northern Regional Medical Command
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Washington, D.C.

It was a chilly 28 F when I got up early on a December morning to go to work at Ireland Community Hospital on Fort Knox, Ky. During good weather, it typically took me 30 minutes to cover the 18 miles from my home in Elizabethtown, Ky. However, it had snowed overnight, so I knew it was going to take me much longer than usual. What I didn't know was it would take me 2½ hours to reach the hospital and, when I did, I'd be in the back of an ambulance.

That morning, I got into my black 2000 Oldsmobile Intrigue and buckled up — as is my normal habit — and cautiously drove toward Fort Knox on U.S. Route 31. The snow on the road was about 3 inches thick and more snow was piled alongside the highway from road-clearing operations. I kept my speed down to 15 mph until I reached Old Fort Knox Road. I then turned onto the road, which ran straight about 30 feet before transitioning into a lazy S-turn that sloped downhill for a half mile.

Although there was only light snow on Old Fort Knox Road, I continued to drive very cautiously. However, I was unaware that there was a sheet of black ice covering the road beneath the snow. My car suddenly began sliding and twice I swerved back and forth across the road, trying to regain control. Nothing I did helped, and I went off the right shoulder, down a slope and into a ravine. As my car began rolling over, I started praying. After rolling

“NO ONE had WITNESSED the ACCIDENT and my calls for HELP went UNHEARD and UNANSWERED.”

four times, the Oldsmobile came to rest on its wheels and water flowed through every opening into the car. I was very scared, but at least I was alive and able to move. I unhooked my seat belt and attempted to get out of the car, but the door was jammed. I tried again to push it open, but the door wouldn't budge. Still very scared, I climbed out through a window and found myself standing chest deep in very cold water. The top of my car was smashed down and the windshield, rear window and side windows were all broken out. I couldn't see the trunk or hood — both were underwater.

It was still dark and the roads were empty. No one had witnessed the accident and my calls for help went unheard and unanswered. I tried to climb out of the ravine but kept slipping because the sides were covered with ice and snow. I was scared and in pain. Using my cell phone, I called 911, explained the situation and requested help. I then called the operating room, knowing one of my on-call technicians would be there. I told them I'd run off the road and needed help. Ultimately, the fire department and emergency medical technicians arrived on scene. After a brief rescue operation, I was put on a stretcher, given a neck brace and taken to the hospital in the back of an ambulance.

After a complete examination, the doctor diagnosed me with a bruised left shoulder (from the seat belt). Although I was in a lot of pain, I was alive and fortunate not to have broken any bones, suffered any serious cuts or experienced a concussion or amnesia. My car was destroyed, but I had survived. The ambulance crew, firefighters and doctors were astonished that my injuries weren't worse and attributed that to my seat belt use.

That morning, my seat belt saved my life — of that I am sure. Had I been unbelted, I could have been injured or lost consciousness as my car rolled and been unable to escape when it flooded. Some people are afraid to wear seat belts, scared they will be trapped inside their car if it goes into the water. I found out the opposite was true — because of my seat belt, I was able to escape and survive.

I never put my car in gear without first buckling up and making sure my passengers do so too. I learned that December morning what a difference seat belts can make in a rollover accident. My seat belt saved my life and yours could do the same for you.

The bottom line message is simple — buckle up before you start up. Take care of safety first! «

Do the Right Thing

1ST SGT. JAMES SITES
82nd Maintenance Company
Georgia Army National Guard
Fort Benning, Ga.

It was the fall of 1993 and I'd just joined the Georgia Army National Guard. After being out of the Army for a little more than a year, I was eager to return to service.

My first drill was at Fort Stewart, and the unit was heading to the field. Upon meeting my platoon sergeant, I was asked if I could drive a 5-ton truck. I proudly told him I was licensed to drive all of the Army's wheeled vehicles, 10-ton and below. As I began my preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS), the platoon sergeant told me the truck had already been checked and was fine. "Just drive it," he said. At that moment, I had a choice to make. Do I do the right thing and stand firm, or do I concede to fit in.

The first thing I thought about was a specialist I knew who died in an accident during Desert Storm. She was an 88M (motor transport operator) and could drive a truck better than anyone I'd ever seen. I was a mechanic, and we became fast friends during motor stables. Every time I saw her, she was carrying her -10. She believed you could never be too careful. "Check your equipment before getting in," she would always say. It was something that was drilled into her head during driver training.

I then thought about how it felt to hear she'd died when the truck she was driving flipped. That memory gave me the strength to take the hard road. I told the platoon sergeant the requirements stated the one operating the vehicle was to conduct PMCS, not someone else. He wasn't too happy with me and said he'd find someone else to drive the truck.

While he was looking for another mechanic to drive the truck, I inspected it. When I got to the tires, I noticed the right front was low on air and the inner tread was worn. I couldn't believe someone had driven this truck in this condition on the interstate from Savannah to Fort Stewart.

When the platoon sergeant returned, he had another mechanic with him who was ready to jump into the seat and take off to the field. Before he could leave, I showed the platoon sergeant the tire. He decided to send the truck to the motor pool to have the tire replaced. As the young mechanic took off across the staging area toward the motor pool, I heard a loud bang. I looked up just in time to see the truck swerve sharply.

As I ran to check on the driver, I could see the tire had exploded and the truck was resting on its rim. Fortunately, the driver was all right. I then realized that if I'd taken the platoon sergeant's word that the truck was fine and driven to the field, the tire would have blown out on me. Driving at a higher rate of speed, I may have been seriously injured or even killed.

As I look back on this incident, I believe my friend was watching out for me. Remembering her commitment to safety gave me the courage to stand up for what I believed was right. Who would have thought that her driver training would have rubbed off on me? It might have saved my life that day.«

Get the tools before the road gets rough.
Driver's Training Toolbox
https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox/

SLOSHED on the SLOPES

RETIRED 1ST SGT. DAVID G. HARPER
Headquarters, Headquarters Company
501st Sustainment Brigade
Camp Carroll, South Korea

For some, alcohol is as much a part of skiing as zipping down the mountainside. In fact, a common visual is the sleek hero — drink in hand — flanked by several snow bunnies while relaxing in front of a roaring fire. On one ski trip, however, a friend and I learned alcohol has no place on the slopes.

It was the early 1980s and I was young, skilled and bulletproof — at least in my mind. I was fresh from a European tour, where I had haunted the slopes of the Alps in various countries. Now that I was stationed at Fort Carson, Colo., the Rocky Mountains were calling my name. A bunch of buddies and I decided a trip was in order, so we piled into a van one morning at "0-dark-thirty" and headed for Monarch Mountain's deep, white powder.

On the ride up to the slopes, a thermos was passed around with "Irish" coffee — you know, just to keep us warm. Once at the lodge, we wasted no time suiting up. I grabbed my bota bag, which was full of "warm-up juice," and headed for the lift. My friend, Joe, and I tore up the slopes until midday. By then, we were feeling tired, hungry and more than a little buzzed, so we headed for the lodge to get some chili and a few brews.

After warming up, it was back to the slopes. On the ride up the lift, Joe said, "Let's race; loser buys the beer at the end of the day." Of course, I was

ALCOHOL AND WINTER WEATHER

There is a common misconception that alcohol can warm your body in cold weather. In reality, it encourages dehydration and causes surface blood vessels to dilate, which cools the blood, thereby decreasing the body's temperature. The false sense of warmth you get actually leaves you more susceptible to cold weather injuries such as frostbite and hypothermia. In addition, the lack of oxygen at higher altitudes can intensify the effects of alcohol. Alcohol clouds judgment and common sense, creating a false sense of confidence. That's not a good thing before undertaking any dangerous activity.

more than game for the challenge. I got the jump off the lift and had the initial lead; however, by mid-slope, Joe started to gain on me. I tucked in and tried for even more breakneck speed, but I hit a slight bump, got squirrelly and lost my momentum. As Joe buzzed by, I could see him laughing. Unfortunately, he didn't get to collect on our bet. He did get a free helicopter ride and two weeks in the hospital — the victim of speed, overconfidence, alcohol … and a tree.

We've all been bombarded with the message that it is illegal to drink and drive, but many are unaware that the same rules apply to activities such as skiing, boating or snowboarding. In fact, if you are found under the influence after a skiing accident, you can be held financially liable. Some locations are also prosecuting offenders. It has become such a problem at some resorts that the ski patrol now carries breathalyzers and has violators arrested. What's more, Colorado has enacted a law targeting skiers acting in a careless manner that allows for a $1,000 fine for being drunk and stupid.

Fortunately, Joe recovered from his injuries and we both came away from this experience with an important lesson learned. When you're on the slopes, leave the booze behind. In addition to risking your own life, you're jeopardizing the safety of others on the mountain with you.«

SKI PATROL!

Skiing can be a great way to spend a vacation. Before hitting the slopes, keep in mind the following safety tips provided by the National Ski Patrol.

- **Get into shape.** You'll enjoy skiing more if you're physically fit.
- **Obtain proper equipment.** Be sure to have your ski or snowboard bindings adjusted correctly at a ski shop. You can also rent good ski or snowboarding equipment at resorts.
- **Take a lesson.** The best way to become a good skier or snowboarder is to take a lesson from a qualified instructor.
- **Drink plenty of water.** Be careful not to become dehydrated.
- **Curb alcohol consumption.** Skiing and snowboarding do not mix with alcohol or drugs.
- **Dress in layers.** Layering allows you to accommodate your body's constantly changing temperature. For example, dress in polypropylene underwear (top and bottoms) which feels good next to the skin, dries quickly, absorbs sweat and keeps you warm. Wear a turtleneck, sweater and jacket.
- **Be prepared.** Mother Nature has a mind of her own. Bring a headband or hat to the slopes. Wear gloves or mittens (mittens are usually better for those susceptible to cold hands).
- **Wear sun protection.** The sun reflects off the snow and is stronger than you think, even on cloudy days!
- **Always wear eye protection.** Skiing and snowboarding are a lot more fun when you can see.
- **When buying skiwear, look for fabric that is water and wind resistant.** Look for wind flaps to shield zippers, snug cuffs at wrists and ankles, collars that can be snuggled up to the chin and drawstrings that can be adjusted for comfort and keep wind out. Be sure to buy quality clothing products.
- **Know your limits.** Learn to ski and snowboard smoothly — and in control. Stop before you become fatigued and, most of all, have fun!

For more information, visit the National Ski Patrol website at http://www.nsp.org.

SaFe WinterFun!

Army Safe is Army Strong and that starts with a Soldier's Family. Have the information to help you and your Family stay SAFE.

Be prepared on your winter vacation and get your own Family Engagement Kit

TODAY!

Family engagement kit

https://safety.army.mil

Be Smart When You Jump-Start!

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Strategic Communication Directorate
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

It was just after New Year's and my wife and I were driving from my parents' home in Little Rock, Ark., back to Bonaire, Ga. It was back in the early 1990s, and Old Man Winter had plunged the temperatures through the floorboard in the Midwest and even parts of the South. We crawled along Interstate 40 east from Little Rock to Memphis, Tenn., running between 25 and 30 mph on patches of snow and black ice. By driving carefully, we avoided joining the other vehicles that had gone off the road. Nightfall came between Memphis and Nashville, and the snow reached the point I could no longer see to drive. Finally, exhausted and running out of my third gallon of antifreeze windshield washer fluid (something you need lots of on long trips in snowy conditions), we pulled off the road and found a hotel. It wasn't the Hilton, but any room with a warm bed looked pretty good that night.

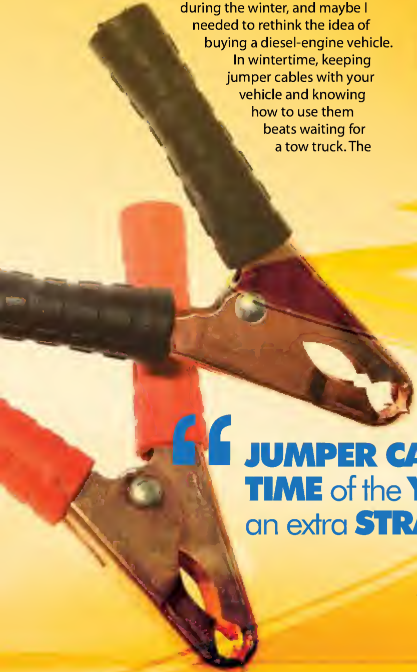
Come morning, we dressed and headed out to the car with our luggage. There was a restaurant next to the hotel, so we planned to load our luggage, have breakfast and then hit the road. In the hotel parking lot, there was a Mercedes-Benz sedan with its hood up. I walked over to the owner and asked what was wrong. He told me his car had been running fine the previous night, but now he couldn't get it to turn over. He explained the car's diesel engine was hard to start on cold mornings — apparently much harder than a normal gasoline-powered engine. I felt sorry for his plight. I could tell he — like us — wanted to get back on the road.

Since his hood was up, I looked inside the engine compartment to locate the battery. Fortunately, the parking spots beside his car were empty, so I pulled my car close enough that my jumper cables could reach both our batteries. I connected the cables, making sure to attach them in proper sequence. He tried to crank his car, but it wouldn't start. He explained it would take time for his battery to develop a sufficient charge to turn over his engine. I started my engine and let it run for several minutes while my car warmed up and I cleared the snow off my windows, hood and trunk. Finally, the Mercedes started and I unhooked the battery cables, put them in my trunk and then went to breakfast with my wife. As we ate, two things stuck out in my mind: I'd better always have jumper cables with me during the winter, and maybe I needed to rethink the idea of buying a diesel-engine vehicle.

In wintertime, keeping jumper cables with your vehicle and knowing how to use them beats waiting for a tow truck. The National Safety Council offers the following tips on how to use your jumper cables so neither you nor your battery comes to a "shocking" conclusion.

If your battery's charge is too low to start your engine:

- Position another vehicle with a healthy battery next to your car, being careful they don't touch each other. Be sure both batteries are of the same voltage.
- Read the owner's manuals for both vehicles for any special directions.
- Turn off the ignitions of both vehicles and set the parking brakes. Place automatic transmissions in "Park" and standard transmissions in neutral.
- Wear safety glasses and gloves while using cables.
- Unless given different directions in the owner's manual, use the booster cables in this order:
  1. Clamp/connect one end of the positive (+) booster cable to the positive (+) post of the dead battery.
  2. Connect the other end of the same cable to the same marked post (+) of the booster battery.
  3. Connect the negative (-) booster cable to the negative (-) post of the booster battery.
  4. Make the final negative (-) booster cable connection on the engine block of the stalled vehicle away from the battery.
- Start the booster vehicle and let it run for a few minutes. Then, start the disabled vehicle.
- Remove the cables in the reverse order of connection, being very careful not to let the booster cable clamps touch each other or come in contact with car parts. Also, avoid the engine cooling fans, as they can sometimes run without the engine being on.



> “**JUMPER CABLES** can be handy **ANY TIME** of the **YEAR**, but **WINTER** puts an extra **STRAIN** on **BATTERIES**.”

Jumper cables can be handy any time of the year, but winter puts an extra strain on batteries. Before you hit the road this Christmas, make sure you've got a good set of cables and know how to use them. After all, Santa won't have time to stop and give you a tow!«

Preflight ... Complete!

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 SEAN HIGGINS
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How many times have we said, "Preflight complete," during a crew brief and not double-checked to make sure it was actually completed by the crew? Over the past two years, the UH-72 community has experienced four Class C accidents, two of these occurring within the last five months, due to the right hydraulic access doors coming open during flight. This has caused the loss of four hydraulic access doors and 16 rotor blades.

Two human-error factors caused each of these accidents. The first aircrew-related cause factor was a crewmember failed to secure the hydraulic access door after checking the hydraulics system in accordance with the Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM). The RFM states, "The preflight check is essentially a visual check of the helicopter condition." One of the required preflight checks in the RFM before each flight is "Hydraulic access door – Closed, secured."

The second cause factor was the crew failed to notice the unsecured hydraulic access door during their walk-around before flight. In accordance with the aircrew training manual (ATM), Task 1022, Perform Preflight Inspection, "The PC (pilot in command) will ensure that a walk-around inspection is completed prior to flight." The ATM also states, "If circumstances permit, accomplish a preflight inspection during daylight hours." If you cannot preflight during daylight, then you should use an unfiltered (white) lens to supplement available lighting.

What Can We Do?

- Crewmembers should not become distracted during preflight. If you run into a maintenance problem during preflight, correct the issue and then preflight the area again.
- If you split up the preflight, sit down as a crew and go over the entire preflight checklist to ensure you visually inspected the aircraft and all required checks were completed in accordance with the RFM.
- The entire crew must do the walk-around, not just one person. As a technique, have one rated crewmember (RCM) walk clockwise and the other RCM counterclockwise before getting into the aircraft. If you have a nonrated crewmember, have him do one as well. The more sets of eyes, the better the chance of finding a problem. Remember to use an unfiltered lens during the walk-around if it is dark.

Summary

These accidents could have been prevented had the PC ensured the aircraft preflight was conducted in accordance with the RFM and ATM. As the PC, it is your responsibility.«

Trouble in Paradise

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 CHRIS BRYANT
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Editor's note: Swimming safety isn't a topic we give much thought to in December. However, every year, thousands of winter-weary travelers jet off to tropical locales to spend the holidays relaxing on the beach. What happened to the author is a perfect example why we can never give safety a day off — even while on vacation.

It was December 2004, and my family and I were enjoying a Hawaiian-style Christmas on the island of Oahu. We were even treated to a "white" Christmas at the renowned North Shore of Oahu, where the waves churned up a frothy seascape. As inviting as the water looked to the "snowbirds" who migrate to the islands during the winter, there were signs posted in the area that warned of the possibility of strong currents and rip tides. These hazardous conditions are common for Hawaii in the wintertime, so the beaches remain open for swimming and surfing for those willing to accept the risks.

I decided to get into the water with my sons, who were 15 and 14 at the time. My 14-year-old son is a native Hawaiian who I had adopted two years earlier. I assumed he was a strong swimmer since he was born and raised on the island. That false assumption was the catalyst that set off a chain of events I will never forget.

We'd been playing in chest-deep water for about 20 minutes when my older son yelled to me that the younger one was in trouble. I turned around in time to see that he'd been caught in an undercurrent and was now over his head and gasping for air. My older son and I had only taken a couple of strokes toward him before we, too, were caught in the riptide. I panicked, which was compounded by the fact that my foot brushed across what felt like hair near the bottom. I had now lost sight of my older son, and I thought it was his head that my foot had brushed against. As my younger son popped up and gasped for air again, he yelled, "Dad, help!" That was the exact moment when my panic took a back seat to action, as I called upon the overwater and open-water survival training I received over my years as an aviator.

I thought briefly about my battalion overwater instructor leering down from the poolside, telling me to swim away from the wall, compose myself and breathe slower. Unfortunately, he never mentioned which son to choose to help when they're both drowning — and you're likely going down with them. I swam to my younger son and told him to keep swimming. I remember yelling, "Don't you dare quit on me!"

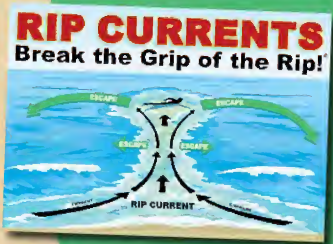
Fortunately, it worked. I maneuvered behind my son and began pushing him toward the shore. I would push him, submerge, resurface, breathe and then repeat the process. He kept swimming and I kept pushing and yelling. This unorthodox technique managed to attract the attention of a lifeguard

on the shore. With much effort, we eventually reached shallower water and crawled out of the surf and onto the beach. It was at that moment the lifeguard arrived on the scene and without so much as getting his feet wet yelled, "Get out of the water!" I know what you're thinking and trust me; if I had retained enough strength, I would have said something equally inspiring back to him.

I ignored the lifeguard and turned to look for my other son. As I completed my scan, I spotted him walking out of the surf about 150 yards away. How he was able to make it out safely amazes me to this day. He had paid attention to a safety briefing one of our young lieutenants had given to the Soldiers and our Family members at the installation pool one day and employed what he had learned.

The lieutenant was closer to the target audience's age and was an avid surfer, which, in my book, made him the right choice for the water safety instructor. On an easel pad, he drew a depiction of a rip current and taught us how to get out of one by swimming parallel to the shore. Once clear of the current, you can swim ashore unhindered. That was exactly what my son had done.

As for what my foot had brushed against — seaweed, Jimmy Hoffa or Elvis — it was irrelevant at that point. That day was a victory for the home team.«



Courtesy of the National Weather Sevice

»FYI

Keep the following tips in mind before participating in any risky activity:

- **DO conduct your safety training with the mindset that the information you are conveying can save someone's life.**
- **DO include Family members whenever possible when the topics are relevant to activities they may participate in.**
- **DO research the area where you will be swimming and know the hazards you may encounter.**
- **DO NOT guess about your Family members', Soldiers' or friends' swimming abilities. Ensure you identify weak swimmers and avoid risky swimming situations until they have completed swim training.**
- **DO NOT ignore or marginalize warning signs when they are posted.**
- **DO NOT allow yourself to operate without a safety outlet when participating in risky activities.**

AVIATION

CH-47F

CLASS A

- The aircraft was damaged when the crew experienced brownout conditions during landing. The aircraft came to rest on its side.

OH-58D(I)

CLASS C

- The aircraft experienced an overspeed and struck the ground before the crew could initiate recovery.

OH-58D(R)

CLASS C

- The aircraft experienced a power turbine (NP) spike of 124 RPM for four seconds during an engine run-up for a FADEC check.

TH-67A

CLASS B

- The main rotor blade contacted the ground as the aircraft initiated a left-hand roll during liftoff to a hover. The main rotor, tail boom and transmission separated from the aircraft.

UH-60L

CLASS A

- The aircraft sustained damage upon landing on steep terrain to recover survivors of a civilian aircraft accident.

C-12U

CLASS C

- The aircraft was struck by lightning and sustained damage to the right side, to include the engine.

UAS

MQ-1B

CLASS A

- The unmanned aircraft (UA) lost data link, and controllers were unable to initiate emergency recovery procedures. The UA rose to 3,500 feet and then descended, losing radar contact.

RQ-11

CLASS B

- The UA experienced RPM decay on final approach, followed by the loss of the engine and loss of link. The UA crashed and was deemed unrecoverable.

RQ-7B

CLASS B

- The UA experienced a drop in RPM at 1,200 feet above ground level (AGL), followed by engine failure. The chute deployed and the UA was recovered with damage.

- The UA landed hard on the airfield after it was unable to gain altitude following launch.

LOSSES AVIATION

Class A/Fatalities as of Nov. 3, 2010

ATTACK	0/0
RECON	0/0
UTILITY	0/0
CARGO	0/0
TRAINING	0/0
FIXED-WING	0/0
UAS	2/0
TOTAL	2/0

CLASS C

- The UA failed to gain altitude during launch and struck the ground. The recovery chute cover separated on impact. All components were recovered.

GROUND

AMV

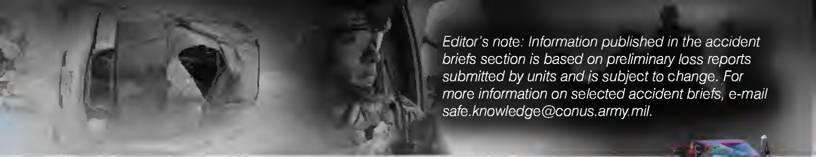
CLASS A

- A local national was killed when he was pinned between a trailer and the light medium tactical vehicle he was ground guiding.

LOSSES GROUND

Class A/Fatalities as of Nov. 3, 2010

AMV	0/0
ACV	0/0
PERSONNEL INJURY includes weapons-handling accidents	4/3
FIRE/ EXPLOSIVE	0/0
PROPERTY DAMAGE	2/0
TOTAL	6/3



Editor's note: Information published in the accident briefs section is based on preliminary loss reports submitted by units and is subject to change. For more information on selected accident briefs, e-mail safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil.

Personnel Injury

CLASS A

- A Soldier died after the boat he was operating struck a concrete bridge piling.

- A Soldier was killed in a friendly fire accident during combat operations.

DRIVING

POV

CLASS A

- A Soldier died when his pickup went off the road and struck a tree. The Soldier was not wearing his seat belt.

- A Soldier was killed when the pickup he was driving with his wife and children was struck by an oncoming vehicle that crossed the centerline.

- An unbelted Soldier died when he attempted to pass a tractor-trailer, lost control, went into the median and was ejected from his vehicle.

- While driving in foggy conditions, a Soldier crossed the centerline and collided head-on with another vehicle. The Soldier was evacuated for treatment and later died in the hospital.

- A Soldier died when he lost control of his vehicle in a 90-degree turn, went off the road, overturned and landed inverted in a ditch.

- A Soldier was killed when his vehicle rear-ended a slow-moving tractor-trailer as it was climbing a hill.

POM

CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed when his motorcycle crossed the centerline in a left-hand curve and collided with a tractor-trailer.

- A Soldier died after his motorcycle left the road and he was thrown 100 feet into a concrete culvert. The Soldier was not wearing his helmet.

- A Soldier died when an SUV pulled out of a parking lot and into his motorcycle's path.

- Speeding on a borrowed motorcycle, a Soldier died when he lost control, went off the road and was thrown into a fence post.

- A Soldier died when his motorcycle was struck head-on by a pickup driven by another Soldier.

LOSSES POV/POM Class A/Fatalities as of Nov. 3, 2010

CAR	0/0
SUV/JEEP	0/0
TRUCK	1/1
MOTORCYCLE	6/6
PEDESTRIAN	0/0
OTHER* *Includes vans and ATVs	0/0
TOTAL	7/7

Fiscal Year 2010: 14 Three Year Average: 12

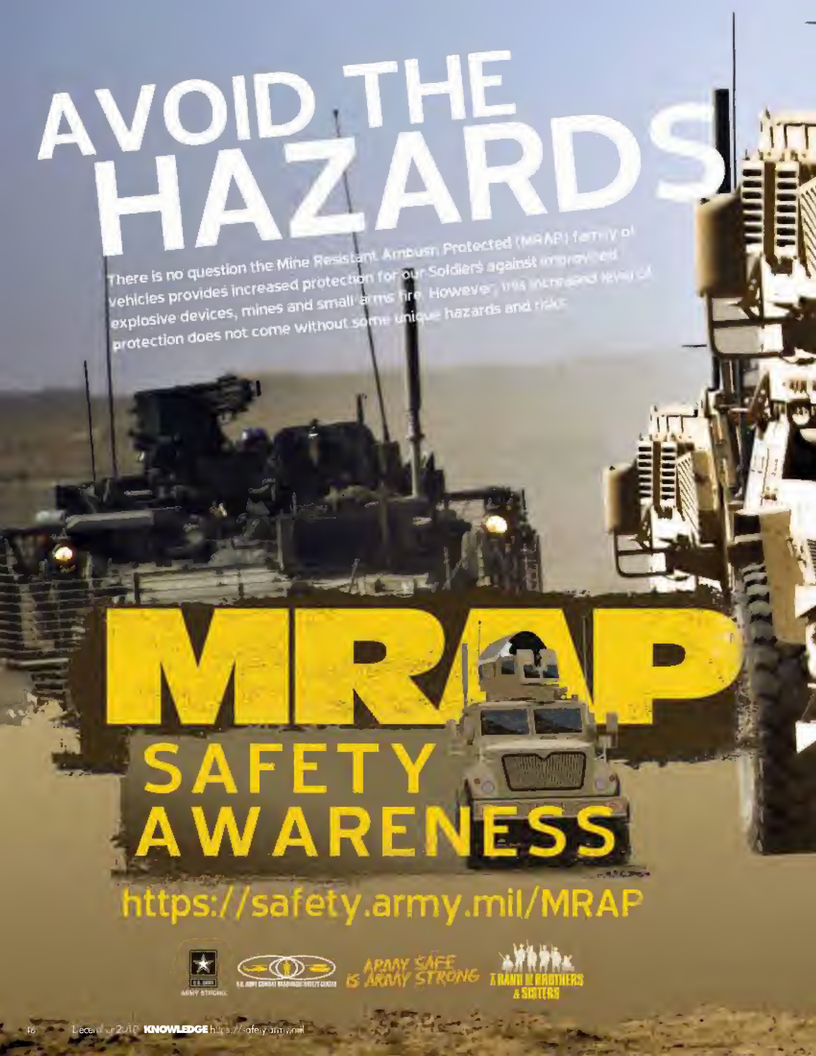
- A Soldier was killed when he crashed his motorcycle while racing two automobiles. The Soldier was not wearing any personal protective equipment.

Pedestrian

CLASS A

- A Soldier died when he was struck by a vehicle while crossing a street.

- A Soldier was killed when he was struck by a car while walking down the middle of a street early in the morning.



AVOID THE HAZARDS

There is no question the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) family of vehicles provides increased protection for our Soldiers against improvised explosive devices, mines and small arms fire. However, this increased level of protection does not come without some unique hazards and risks.

MRAP SAFETY AWARENESS

https://safety.army.mil/MRAP

U.S. ARMY
ARMY STRONG.

U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

A BAND OF BROTHERS & SISTERS

Address the hazards associated with the operation of MRAPs. Implement effective composite risk management, comprehensive training, situational awareness and effective leadership to keep Soldiers safe and avoid loss and damage to equipment.

BE AWARE.

TAKE THE CHALLENGE,
LEARN THE LESSON.

FIREARMS
safety techniques

GIVE IT A SHOT!

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